

Numbers 19 - Thursday, October 14th, 2010

- Numbers 19 is perhaps one of the most fascinating chapters in the entire Bible as it relates to the prophetic picture in which it paints.

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 2 "This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying: 'Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring you a red heifer without blemish, in which there is no defect and on which a yoke has never come.

- It's important to understand that a red heifer is a cow that has never given birth or produced milk, and had to be completely red in color.
- This would indicate that the red heifer would not only be rare, but pure as well, which as we'll see shortly, has profound implications.
- In addition to being rare and pure, this red heifer had to be without defect and it was to never have had a yoke, or burden placed on it.

CHARLES SPURGEON - Observe that this red heifer was one where there never came a yoke. Perhaps this sets forth how willingly Christ came to die for us. Not dragged to His death. The free Son of God wears no yoke, except that yoke which was easy to Him and that burden which was light, the yoke of love which constrained Him to lay down His life for His people. www.spurgeongems.org

- So, the Lord gives them a new ordinance of the law commanding them to bring a red heifer without blemish as a sacrifice to the Lord.
- This is interesting because it's given years later, and the red heifer was to be sacrificed outside the camp instead of in the tabernacle.
- I believe it's for that reason a whole chapter is devoted to this sacrifice and the specific details regarding the instructions for the priests.

One commentator noted how that the Talmud claims the Red Heifer sacrifice was the only one of God's commands that King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, claimed he did not understand. They say that when Solomon wrote, "this was beyond" me Ecclesiastes 7:23), he was referring to the Red Heifer ritual.

3 You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, that he may take it outside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered before him;

- They were to bring the red heifer to Eleazar who, as a priest, was to take it outside of the camp and slaughtered as he looked on.
- While it's about to get very graphic and very detailed, all of these specific instructions will have profound prophetic implications.

4 and Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and sprinkle some of its blood seven times directly in front of the tabernacle of meeting. 5 Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight: its hide, its flesh, its blood, and its offal shall be burned. 6 And the priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet, and cast them into the midst of the fire burning the heifer. 7 Then the priest shall wash his clothes, he shall bathe in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp; the priest shall be unclean until evening. 8 And the one who burns it shall wash his clothes in water, bathe in water, and shall be unclean until evening. 9 Then a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and store them outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for the water of purification; it is for purifying from sin.

- Notice the graphic detail with which the sacrifice of this red heifer was made. Also, notice the types of articles used in this sacrifice.
- They were to have cedar wood, hyssop, scarlet, fire, and water, all of which were part of this unique sacrifice unlike all of the others.
- As we'll see later, the use of scarlet will paint a powerful prophetic picture as it relates to the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

"When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted. What a picture this gives of Christ, dying on the tree, shedding His precious blood that He might "bring many sons unto glory" (Heb. 2:10)! He died for us, that we might live through Him! Ps. 22:6 describes such a worm and gives us this picture of Christ. (cf. Isa 1:18)"

Henry Morris, "Biblical Basis for Modern Science" p. 73

10 And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until evening. It shall be a statute forever to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them. 11 He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. 13 Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him. 14 This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who are in the tent shall be unclean seven days; 15 and every open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, is unclean. 16 Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is the large numbers of deaths everyday in the wilderness wandering.
- There is much speculation as to how many deaths per day, but suffice it to say, they would have touched dead body's every day.
- One reason for this purification was that it would protect them from diseases that one could get from coming into contact with a body.

This cleansing was for those who were unclean from touching a dead body. This was an effective medical law as well as a spiritual law. The water was combined with cedar, hyssop, and scarlet thread. This combination actually had the ability to destroy germs and infection because it contained "cedar" oil that came from a kind of juniper tree that grew in both Israel and in the Sinai. This cedar oil would irritate the skin, causing the person to vigorously rub the solution into their hands. The hyssop tree-associated with mint, possibly marjoram-would produce hyssop oil. This hyssop oil is actually a very effective antiseptic and antibacterial agent containing 50 percent carvacrol, an antifungal and antibacterial agent still used in medicine. (Taken in part from: None Of These Diseases)

The Book of Hebrews (9:12-14) reveals that Paul, an educated rabbi, understood that the Red Heifer sacrifice had a practical medical effect (v. 13 "for the purifying of the flesh"), as well as its more obvious spiritual element.

17'And for an unclean person they shall take some of the ashes of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel.18 A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, sprinkle it on the tent, on all the vessels, on the persons who were there, or on the one who touched a bone, the slain, the dead, or a grave.19 The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; and at evening he shall be clean.

- Now we get into specific uses for the ashes and how they were to be put on a vessel in order to purify and cleanse those items as well.

20 'But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he is unclean.21 It shall be a perpetual statute for them. He who sprinkles the water of purification shall wash his clothes; and he who touches the water of purification shall be unclean until evening.22 Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean; and the person who touches it shall be unclean until evening."

- Here the Lord gives them additional detailed instructions as it relates to purifying and cleansing oneself when becoming defiled.

- It's interesting to note that one must purify himself, and if he is assisting in the purification of another, he must be purified himself.

- Also, ones uncleanness could easily make other people unclean in the event that he came into contact with them. How true is this?

- While that's one of many personal applications in this chapter, I want to round a corner and look at the many prophetic implications.

- Perhaps it goes without saying but all the details in this sacrifice of the red heifer paints a perfect picture of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

VS	THE DEATH OF THE RED HEIFER	THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST
2	Had to be red in color. "Red" in Hebrew is very close to Adam's name, man-mankind.	Jesus the second Adam came for the remission of sin that entered mankind by the first Adam, thus His red blood was shed.
2	Had to be a pure virgin female. (Only this sacrifice was a female). Leviticus 27:3-4	Jesus born of a virgin was sacrificed to die and for thirty pieces of silver (the price of a female). Matthew 26:15
2	Had to be without spot or blemish.	Jesus was without a spot of sin or blemish.
2	Had to never be under a yoke of bondage.	Jesus had never been yoked to man or in bondage to sin.
3	Had to be given to the priest Eleazar by virtue of his being a son of Aaron.	Jesus has given us the priesthood as a believer when we enter into a personal relationship by virtue His being the Son of God.
3	Had to be slaughtered outside the Horse-gate or Damascus Gate located North.	Jesus had been crucified outside the Horse-gate to the North of the city at Calvary, (Golgotha).
3	Had to be put to death while Eleazar, the second priest, looked on.	Jesus the second person of the Trinity was put to death while God the Father looked on.
4	Had to have its blood sprinkled "7" times.	Jesus had His blood shed "7" times in seven different places.
6	Had to be cedar wood.	Jesus was likely crucified on a cross made of cedar wood.
6	Had to be hyssop	Jesus had been offered to take hyssop soaked in vinegar.
6	Had to be scarlet wool.	Jesus became that scarlet sin.
6	Had to be led out of Jerusalem, bound and thrust into a pit ignited by fire as the cedar wood and hyssop bound by scarlet wool were thrown onto it.	Jesus was led out of Jerusalem as the innocent Lamb of God to the wooden cross. Nails where thrust into his hands and feet. As the God Man was bound by our sin that was thrown onto Him.
9	Had to use the ashes from the death of the heifer in order to be cleansed.	Jesus offers us forgiveness in His death on the cross in order for us to be cleansed.
17	Had to put some ashes into a vessel and pour "running water" upon them.	Jesus the Word gave us His Word that He would send the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon us.
17	Had to be "running water" in the Hebrew, "living waters shall be given".	Jesus gives us the Third Person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit, so our lives are full-"filled" and become torrents of "living water".
18	Had to dip hyssop in water with the ashes and sprinkle them in order to be cleansed.	Jesus baptizes us in the Holy Spirit Who showers us with gifts and empowers us to live a pure (clean) and holy (whole) life.
18	Had to be applied with hyssop to be purified.	Jesus died, and His death has to be applied for us to be purified.
19	Had to be one man willing to become unclean (sin) in order to cleanse all men from uncleanness (sin).	Jesus, "behold the man" was the one who willingly became sin for us in order to cleanse us from all sin.
19	Had to be used for cleansing on the "third" and "seventh" day.	Jesus our "New Covenant" (in the "seventh" millennium) made the "Old Covenant" with Israel at Mt. Sinai during the "third" millennium on the Jewish calendar).

- The red heifer is significant prophetically as it relates to the first coming of Jesus Christ and the second coming of Jesus Christ as well.

"The orthodox Jews today, envision a tremendous problem in the rebuilding of the temple, before they could start sacrifices and all again, the priest would have to be purified. Well, interestingly enough, in one of the Ashbeas in the old city, young men are being trained for the priesthood right now. ...But, as the orthodox point out, they cannot enter into the priesthood without going through the cleansing rites, and to go through the cleansing rites, "We have to have the ashes of a red heifer."

Pastor Chuck Smith, Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa

On March 2nd of this year, Arutz Sheva's Israel National Radio broadcast some breaking news reporting that "A Red Heifer is Alive and Well in Israel!" – "In this highly charged live special two hour broadcast of Temple Talk, Yitzchak Reuven and Rabbi Richman reflect upon the lessons of Purim and modern-day Hamans. They also talk about the relationship between the Golden Calf and the mysterious Red Heifer, including the dramatic revelation of a new red heifer alive and well in Israel at an undisclosed location! Our hosts take some lively calls from listeners and interview Yosef Rabin, a Temple activist working diligently on the International Temple Mount Awareness Day (March 16th) project. How are you going to be active in your community to raise Temple Mount awareness? Rabbi Richman reads an angry, threatening letter from a Moslem, plus a letter from the US government, both indicating that people are definitely taking notice of, and acknowledging the importance of, International Temple Mount Awareness Day."

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/Radio/News.aspx/2001>